

Putting your finances in order

Sorting out financial difficulties

The common sense approach

Most of us find ourselves stretched financially from time to time. Usually things get back to normal without our resorting to drastic measures. Occasionally, the situation can get progressively worse and positive action is needed. Mostly it is a matter of common sense. But there may be some simple remedies you've not thought of.

We hope you will find this leaflet useful. And, don't forget, we're always here to help. The quicker you act, the faster and less painful the solution will be.

Let us help you get more from your bank

Take advantage of our Individual Review – it's an opportunity to talk to us about your needs and help you make more of your money. You can tell us what you think of our service, review your current financial arrangements or simply tell us about your future plans.

There is no charge for this service and it could take as little as 20 minutes.

To arrange your Individual Review, call in at any of our branches, or call us on **0345 600 6161**. Lines are open 7:00 to 21:00, every day. To help us continually improve our service, and in the interests of security, we may monitor and/or record your telephone calls with us.

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Reduce your spending

Spending on some items is essential:

- Mortgage, rent
- Gas, electricity, water
- Rates

If you don't make these payments it could lead to repossession, cutting off supplies or a court appearance.

Other spending might not be as essential as you think. If you know you've got to reduce your spending, think it through. Look at your non-essential outgoings first. That is where most, if not all, of your savings will come from.

To help you accurately calculate your total income and spending each month, please complete the Personal Budget Plan on pages 5 to 7. While this may appear daunting, it will enable you to review all your essential and non-essential outgoings to see where you might be able to reduce your spending.

Please note, if you are planning to re-finance in your sole name, you should not base your figures on joint income and expenditure. Instead, consider your contribution to the share of household finances and your own liabilities (money that you owe).

Increasing your income

Are you entitled to benefits you're not claiming? Contact your local Benefits Agency to find out.

If you only work part of a year, contact your local Tax Office and ask if you're entitled to a rebate.

If you are in work, check your tax code. You could be paying too much tax.

If you have repayment protection insurance, make sure you claim if you are out of work through unemployment or illness.

Many trade unions and professional associations offer grants or other financial help to members in difficulties.

If you are a student you may be eligible for special help. Check with the university or college you're enrolled in. You may be able to work part time, but remember, this could affect your tax position or benefit entitlement, so check first.

If you are self-employed, consider:

- Charging interest on late payments
- Using a reputable debt collection agency

Look at how you borrow

Consider the different interest rates you are being charged on borrowing when deciding what to pay first. If you are in work, think about combining all your debts into one.

Mortgages

If you can't afford to pay your mortgage, contact your lender immediately.

- If you are unemployed, they may accept reduced payments if you have a reasonable chance of finding another job.
- You may be able to use other sources of income or funds to cover the mortgage payments, for example savings or investments.

Other loans

If you can't keep up the repayments on a loan, contact your lender immediately.

- Together, work out what you can reasonably afford to pay. Your lender may extend the term of the loan.
- You may be able to reduce payments for a short period and make up the difference later.

Overdrafts

An overdraft provides a method by which customers are able to borrow money to cover short term delays in receipt of expected funds. If you regularly find yourself paying overdraft fees, contact your lender immediately to see if another form of borrowing or a different limit may be more suitable and/or cheaper for you.

Credit cards

If you can't keep up the repayments on your credit card, contact your credit card company immediately.

- Continue paying at least the minimum payment if possible.
- Because the interest rate on credit cards is generally higher than on other types of credit, pay off your credit card balance as soon as possible.
- Consider reducing the use of your card or you'll make the problem worse.

Ask for help

Contact the companies you owe money to

Contact us, and any other companies you owe money to as soon as possible if you find yourself in financial difficulties.

They'll appreciate your honesty and may try to help. Don't ignore your problems as they could take legal action to recover their money, and this could mean you may not be able to get credit in the future.

The more open and honest you are about the problem and causes, the more they will be able to help you. This includes being honest with yourself. Never ignore post from creditors.

Talk to us

How we can help

We know that problems may arise at any time. If you find yourself in financial difficulties, it's in our interest, as well as yours, to find a solution.

The Standards of Lending Practice sets out how financial organisations will deal with their customers, and states that banks will deal sympathetically and positively with people in financial difficulties.

For our business customers, we follow the Lending Code, and the British Bankers' Association's 'Statement of Principles', which explains how we will work with you to deal with financial problems you are experiencing.

We will do all we can to help you overcome your problems. With your co-operation we will help you to develop an affordable plan for dealing with your financial difficulties and we will confirm in writing what has been agreed. There is no sense trying to make payments you cannot afford and will not be able to maintain.

The sooner you discuss your problems, the easier it should be for both of us to find a solution. The more you tell us about your circumstances, the more we may be able to help.

It's important for you to keep in touch with us, especially if circumstances change. We are happy to communicate with you or your advisor by telephone, or in writing depending on your preference. You may also arrange for a discussion at a local branch.

If you are using a service to discuss your financial circumstances, please tell us immediately so that we can allow sufficient time for your discussions with them.

Ways we can help you take control of your money

- Come and talk to us.
- Telephone Banking.
- Personal Internet Banking, through our website **ciiom.hsbc.com**

For more information, or to book an appointment, call **0345 600 6161**. Lines are open 7:00 to 21:00, every day. To help us continually improve our service, and in the interests of security, we may monitor and/or record your telephone calls with us.

Other help

If you are in difficulties, you can also get help and advice from independent debt counselling organisations. We will tell you where you can get free money advice, and if you ask us to, we will work with debt counselling organisations.

**Citizens Advice
St Paul's Centre
New Street
St Helier
JE2 3WP**

Email: **advice@cab.org.je**
Phone: **01534 724942**
Freephone: **0800 735 0249**
cab.org

**Guernsey CAB
Bridge Avenue
The Bridge
St Sampsons
Guernsey
GY2 4QS**

Phone: **01481 242266**
cabguernsey.org

**Citizens Advice Bureau
Unit 4 Bourne Concourse
Peel Street
Ramsey
Isle Of Man
IM8 1JJ**

Phone: **01624 813466**

If you want to solve your own problems independently, your local library or bookshop should have a range of books on managing your money.

**Expenditure 3:
Everyday spending****Each month**

Food

Toiletries

Detergents and
Cleaning materials

Motor Insurance

Breakdown Cover

Car Fuel

Parking

Repairs and Servicing

Fares and Travel

Baby Costs

Children's Pocket Money

Childminder/Babysitter/
Nanny/Nursery

School lunches

Toys, books etc

Pets and Pet Food

Laundry and Dry cleaning

Satellite/Cable/Broadband
subscriptions

Hobbies and Sports

DVDs/CDs

Computer Games

Church/Charity

Alcoholic Drinks

Cigarettes/Tobacco

Newspapers/Magazines

Expenditure 3: Total**£****Expenditure 4:
Occasional Spending****Each month**

Birthdays

Christmas

Holidays

Appliance Repairs

Redecoration

Vet Bills

Clothing Men

Clothing Women

Clothing Children

Hairdressing

School trips

Medical Costs

Dentist

Optician

Entertainment

Subscription/Professional Fees

Expenditure 4: Total**£****Total Monthly Expenditure**

Total 1 + 2 + 3 + 4

£**Balance**

Total Income

£Less Total
Monthly Expenditure**£****Monthly surplus/deficit****£**

Amounts you owe

Bank/Lender	Bank/Lender	Amount outstanding
Mortgage (estimated property value)	£	£
<input type="text" value="£"/>		
Personal loans	£	£
	£	£
	£	£
Credit/Store cards	£	£
	£	£
	£	£
Other (e.g. overdrafts)	£	£
	£	£
	Total debt outstanding	£

We are committed to The Standards of Lending Practice

We adhere to The Standards of Lending Practice.

To find out more visit:

lendingstandardsboard.org.uk

Complaints

If you have a complaint please let us know. We will endeavour to resolve your concerns and put matters right. If your complaint is not settled to your satisfaction you may be able to refer it to the relevant Financial Ombudsman Service.

For accounts held in the Channel Islands you may be entitled to refer your complaint to the Channel Islands Financial Ombudsman at **PO Box 114, Jersey, JE4 9QG.**

For accounts held in the Isle of Man you may be entitled to refer your complaint to the Financial Services Ombudsman Scheme in the Isle of Man at **The Slieau Whallian, Foxdale Road, St John's, Isle of Man, IM4 3AS.**

Accessibility

To find out more about our accessible services please visit ciom.hsbc.com/accessibility or ask at any of our branches.

If you'd like this document in another format such as large print, Braille or audio, please contact us on 03456 006 161.

BSL Video Relay Service is also available (Monday-Friday 8am-6pm, excluding Bank and Public Holidays).

ciom.hsbc.com

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